INFANT-BAPTISM

A

Part and Pillar of Popery

By John Gill, D.D.

LONDON: 1766

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INFANT-BAPTISM, A PART AND PILLAR OF POPERY.

INFANT-BAPTISM

A

Part and Pillar of Popery:

BEING

A VINDICATION

OF A

Paragraph in a Preface to a Reply to Mr. Clarke's Defence of Infant-Baptism,

To which is added, A

POSTSCRIPT,

containing

A full and sufficient Answer to Six Letters of *Candidus, on the Subject and Mode of Baptism,*

BY JOHN GILL, D.D.

The Triumphing of the Wicked is Short.

Zophar in Job, xx:5

LONDON

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

> "The subject of infant baptism is one about which it is easier to write voluminously than significantly..."
> Paul K. Jewett, Infant Baptism and the Covenant of Grace (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), preface, p. 1.

Truth and time have proven that, in the case of Dr. John Gill, the author of the following tract, both of these worthy goals have been more than sufficiently accomplished. He has written upon the subject of infant baptism in a way that is both **voluminous** and **significant** at the same time!

I. As to Dr. Gill being **voluminous**, David Benedict, the Baptist historian, wrote: "Dr. Gill ...was the author of upwards of sixty different works, and among them was an Exposition of the Old and New Testaments in nine volumes folio....Dr. [John] Rippon, his biographer, assures us that had the writings of this eminent man been uniformly printed in the size of his Old and New Testament, they would have made the astonishing sum total of ten thousand folio pages of divinity. Well might Mr. Shrubsole give him [Dr. Gill] the title of Dr. Voluminous." A General History of the Baptist Denomination (Boston, Lincoln and Edmonds, 1813), vol. 1, p. 216. It has been estimated that there are approximately ten million words in Dr. Gill's nine-volume commentary alone, which, in its entirety, expounds the 775,000 words of the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. No other individual, including Matthew Henry, John Calvin, etc., ever accomplished this gigantic task. John Rippon said: "Unless the writer of this paragraph is mistaken, Dr. Gill is the only man who hath published both the Old and New Testament in the English language, so nearly including an exposition of every verse." Brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Reverend and Learned, John Gill, D.D. (London, J.

Bennett, 1838), p. xxxviii. A complete list of all of Dr. Gill's works is found in John Rippon's, A Brief Memoir; Edward Starr's, A Baptist Bibliography (Rochester, American Baptist Historical Society, 1963), vol. 8, pp. 222-240; and in various historical, biographical and theological articles, that have been written. With regard just to his writings that deal with the historical Baptist distinctives and ecclesiological polemics, consider, in the following list, how Dr. Gill proves himself, "Dr. Voluminous:"

1726 The Ancient Mode of Baptism by Immersion Maintained and Vindicated

1727 A Defense of the Ancient Mode

1749 The Divine Right of Infant Baptism Examined and Disproved, A Reply to Mr. Jonathan Dickinson of Elizabethtown, N.J.

1750 The Scriptures the Only Guide in Matters of Religion

1751 The Argument from Apostolic Tradition in Favour of Infant Baptism Considered

1751 An Answer to a Welch Clergyman's Twenty Arguments for Infant Baptism

1751 The Dissenter's Reasons for Separating From the Church of England

1752 Essay on Scripture Baptism...Infant Baptism is destitute of proof

1754 A Reply to Mr. Peter Clark's Defense of the Divine Right of Infant Baptism

1765 Some Strictures on a late treatise called, 'A Fair and Rational Vindication of the

Right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism' by David Bostwick of New York

1765 Baptism, A Divine Command to be Observed, A Sermon preached at the baptism of R. Carmichael

1766 Infant-Baptism: A Part & Pillar of Popery

1770 Baptism: Ch. 1, pp. 896-915, Book 3, A Body of Practical Divinity

1771 A Dissertation Concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes

Whether you consider the quantity or the quality of the aforementioned works, Dr. John Gill stands out as one of the pre-eminent Baptist preachers of all time. If the Lord wills, The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., will continue to carry out its plan to reproduce all of the works by Dr. Gill listed above. Then, after prayerful, prolonged study of the same, we have no doubt that our readers will esteem them not only **voluminous**, but some of the "MOST" significant ever written on the subject of Scriptural baptism.

Jesus said: "Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Mt. 5:11,12). The Apostle Paul said: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Therefore, it is only to be expected that, as usual with godly, faithful, diligent and courageous men, Dr. John Gill was criticized and called many hurtful, ugly names during his lifetime. Also, as is usual, the name-callers were obviously incapable of properly judging the true worth of the man who was the object of their slanderous attacks. Further, we see the name-calling intensified as "Mr. Little-faith's" multiply

century after century. Depravity manifests itself in ignorance, which is reflected in pride, which in turn expresses itself in envy, jealousy and evil-speaking. Depravity and natural carnality moving through this sequence, have moved many to spew abusive words on the name of Dr. John Gill. Dr. Tom J. Nettles has pointed out just recently: "Although Gill's theology differs little from that of Keach and Bunyan (and at points is even less radical), he has doubtless been judged more harshly and even maliciously than any man of comparable repute in Baptist history." By His Grace and For His Glory (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1986), p. 54. A good portion of this calumny has come from ignorant and ungrateful Baptists, who not only should have known better, but also should have been thankful for his defense of the truth on their behalf. It is a pitiful thing when the heirs of a marvelous heritage belittle one of their greatest benefactors. Many of Dr. Gill's critics have been quick to point out that the good doctor dipped his pen deeply into controversy, a large portion of his **voluminous** writings being polemical. Our first response to that charge is that it is always easier to criticize Dr. Gill than to disprove him! We would also like to point out that, to date, the majority of the criticism leveled at Dr. Gill has but proved the truth of the following: "Denunciation is the last resort of a defeated opponent." A.W. Pink, The Sovereignty of God (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1969), pp. 6,7.

The Spirit of Error, working through the wisdom of this world is manifested in the enmity of the carnal mind (Rom. 8:7). These three are preeminently embodied **philosophically** in Rationalism (and its various forms: atheism, humanism, etc.); **theologically** in Arminianism (which is nothing but humanism in a theological dress); and **ecclesiastically** in Catholicism (and all its various doctrines and practices which are propagated by others). In these things, we find some of the main reasons for the disparaging ridicule and/or demeaning patronizing politeness expressed toward the name of Dr.

Gill. Basically, the enmity of the carnal mind cannot endure "sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3,4). It will not be "subject" to the law of God. Therefore, at opportune times, it will rise up in opposition to "God and His doctrine," as inculcated by Dr. John Gill. Another factor involved in the criticism of Gill (especially in modern times), is ignorance of Dr. Gill himself and the times in which he lived, and the thoughtless parroting and propagation of unsubstantial criticism about him. Lord willing, the eighteenth century will be discussed somewhat in our Foreword to our reprint of the tract by Dr. Gill entitled, God's Everlasting Love to His Elect and their Eternal Union with Christ, London, 1732.

As for the man himself, Dr. Gill was not a man to shirk his responsibility to reply to false representations of truth. To hide the truth, or be silent about the truth was, to him, as much unorthodoxy as to deny it. C.H. Spurgeon said: "There must come with every decision for truth a corresponding protest against error." The Sword and Trowel, Sept., 1887, p. 465. Dr. Gill was a man of decided Biblical convictions and he was not slack to fulfill the corresponding responsibility that always goes with those convictions. In 1732, a disagreement arose during a series of lectures, in which Abraham Taylor, an Independent minister, was involved. Participating in the "Lime Street Lectures" were seven Independent ministers and two Baptists, Dr. John Gill and Samuel Wilson. Abraham Taylor had, in his addresses, spoken with "keenness and severity" and in a way "injurious to truth," as it appeared to Dr. Gill. Mr. Taylor had expressly called the doctrine of eternal union with Christ, "an immoral conceit," and those ministers who had heretofore preached it, "ignorant enthusiastic preachers." Dr. Gill wrote Mr. Taylor a printed letter on The Doctrine of God's Everlasting Love to His Elect, their Eternal Union with Christ, etc. According to Dr. John Rippon, when Dr. Gill wrote against Dr. Abraham Taylor, some of the friends of the latter called upon the former, and dissuaded him from going on; urging, among other

things that Gill would lose the esteem and, of course, the subscriptions of some wealthy persons who were Taylor's friends. What was Dr. Gill's reply? "'Don't tell me of losing,' said Gill; 'I value nothing in comparison of Gospel truths. I am not afraid to be poor.'" A Brief Memoir, p. xxiii.

Consider another illustration of the character of Dr. John Gill. In 1733 or 1734, there was a reprinting of Dr. Whitby's anti-Calvinistic book entitled, Discourse On the Five Points. This book, done originally in London in 1710, was judged by many as a masterpiece on the subject. It was extolled by Arminians as unanswerable, and was esteemed to have "confuted Calvinism even to a demonstration." Others, however, pronounced it a bold effort to overturn the leading doctrines of the Gospel: "by learned obscurity, artful sophistry, and a disgusting tautology." Wm. Lowndes, The British Librarian, (London, Thomas Rodd, 1839), p. 735. Implored by friends and moved by conviction, Dr. Gill entered upon the work of preparing an answer. In 1735 and the three following years, Gill published (in four parts) The Cause of God and Truth, his answer to Dr. Whitby. Prior to publication, however, Dr. Gill was told by a member of his congregation that if he published his book, he would lose some of his best friends and that his income would fall off. The doctor said: "I can afford to be poor, but I cannot afford to injure my conscience." C.H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Vol. 2: The Full Harvest, (Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), p. 477.

One final illustration of John Gill himself. In 1736, Dr. Abraham Taylor published An Address to Young Students in Divinity, in which he accused Dr. Gill of being an Antinomian, and labeled everlasting love and eternal union as a filthy dream, an extravagant position, a dangerous tenet big with absurdity, a rude, ignorant, horrible blasphemy, invented by one of the vilest and lewdest heretics; and to close all, an Antinomian paradox. Rather than compromise his convictions, retreat from controversy or tone down his words, Dr. Gill said: "I have chosen

to suffer reproach, the loss of good name and reputation...to forego popularity, wealth and friends... yea, to be traduced as an Antinomian, rather than to drop, or conceal any one branch of truth respecting Christ and his grace." J. Ivimey, A History of the English Baptists (London, B.J. Holdsworth, 1828), vol. 3, p. 450. As far as our research can detect, throughout his life, Dr. Gill stood firmly resolved never to put off his armor until he was to put on his robe. Toward the end of his life, he said: "I am not afraid of the reproaches of man; I have been inured to these, from my youth upwards; none of these things move me." This was the man himself. This type of straightforward, unyielding, honest and yet charitable character belongs, in modern opinion, to another, less enlightened age. The present age of ecumenical tolerance (with its patronizing politeness among professional theologians, its feigned charitable condoning of, and catering to, diametrically-opposed doctrines) has no stomach for the controversy of the former ages, and "earnestly contending for the faith." The flow of theological thought worldwide is given over, for the most part, to rationalism. Little wonder, then, that so many historians, theologians, preachers and church members are quick to criticize Dr. John Gill. However, all those Baptists who are genuinely seeking to understand their historical and theological roots and the origins of the current milieu among Baptist people, cannot avoid the significant writings of Dr. John Gill. Therefore, to simply take note of the **voluminous** writings of Dr. Gill is not enough. We will miss the full impact and practical ramifications of those writings if we do not understand the **true significance** and **vital connectedness** (historically, as well as theologically) of Dr. John Gill to the early Colonial Baptists of America.

II. As to Dr. Gill's being **significant**, consider the following. Contrary to the opinion of some, Dr. Gill was a Strict and Particular Baptist. He was not a Puritan from the Episcopalians, not a Presby-

terian, not a Congregationalist or Independent, and not a formal Protestant. He was a Strict Calvinistic Baptist. His real **significance**, however, stands out when we realize that he was not just "any Baptist," nor just a studious preacher among some minority, heretical Baptist sect. He was, in fact, one of the main spokesmen (if not "the leading spokesman") of the largest and most influential group of Baptists in the British Isles and in America. Again, contrary to the statements of some modern writers, Dr. Gill's preaching was a blessing to his people, and his church prospered spiritually and numerically. Wm. R. Estep, Jr., in his article on John Gill, said: "Almost immediately after going to London, Gill's ministry began to attract wide attention; and during the ensuing years his influence continued to grow until he became one of the best known theologians of his generation." Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists (Nashville, Broadman Press, 1958), vol. 1, p. 560. Dr. John Rippon, pastoral successor to Dr. Gill, states: "Mr. Gill's preaching had been very acceptable from the beginning and his auditory became so numerous, that the place of worship, though a large one, could hardly contain them." Op. cit., p. xvi. According to Dr. Tom Nettles, "In 1753, his congregation was the largest of any Baptist church in England and Wales." Op. cit., p. 75. This was thirty-three years **after** Dr. Gill began his ministry in London! In 1757, his church built a new meeting house in Carter Lane, Southwark, near London Bridge. Speaking in 1823 of the church under Dr. Gill's ministry, Joseph Ivimey said: "It was indeed preserved a respectable community: it belonged to the Baptist Fund, and contributed liberally towards the assistance of poorer churches. It still continues one of our most respectable churches." Op. cit., vol. 3, p. 452. The vast majority of the Particular Baptists looked to Dr. Gill for leadership and they readily identified themselves with his theology. The English Baptist Magazine, No. 21, p. 187, lists him as one of "the skillful defenders" of the doctrinal sentiments of the Particular Baptists. In 1770, Edward

Trivett, himself a Particular Baptist pastor, spoke concerning John Gill and John Brine, and said: "I know the far greater part of Baptists in this kingdom are of the same sentiments with these two witnesses in the fundamentals of religion." The Baptists Vindicated from False Charges (Norwich, England, Richard Beatnish, 1770), p. 7. Reuben A. Guild, former librarian of Brown University, said: "Gill was the acknowledged leader among his brethren throughout Great Britain....his reputation was worldwide." Early History of Brown University, (Providence, Snow and Farnham, 1897), p. 64. Dr. Gill's reputation being such, requests for help and advice came to him from all quarters, and this certainly would not have been the case, had he been generally recognized as unsound. However, a thorough reading of Gill's life will reveal that a good portion of his polemical writings were done in response to the solicitations of other Baptists for his help. In 1726, the Baptists in Northamptonshire sought out Dr. Gill to answer a pamphlet (just recently published) by the Independent minister, Matthias Maurice. Gill's answer was given the same year in The Ancient Mode of Baptism by Immersion. In 1735, he was induced by many requests to answer Whitby's Discourse On the Five Points. His answer was The Cause of God and Truth. In 1737, the Baptists of Birmingham, in Warwickshire, requested Gill to answer the Presbyterian, Samuel Bourne, who had recently written against the Baptists. Dr. Gill responded in the same year, and a volley of articles were exchanged. In 1749, the Baptists of New England requested Dr. Gill to answer a work by Jonathan Dickinson, a Presbyterian, who had recently published a work in Boston advocating the Divine right of infant baptism. Gill responded with The Divine Right of Infant Baptism Examined and Disproved. In 1751, the Doctor produced An Answer to a Welch Clergyman's Twenty Arguments for Infant Baptism. This, along with two other works, was produced and translated into Welch for the benefit of the Baptists of that principality. On March 13, 1760, the

Baptist Church in Philadelphia wrote Dr. Gill seeking help in finding a pastor. Gill recommended Morgan Edwards, a graduate of Bristol Academy. He became their next pastor. Thomas McKibbens and Kenneth Smith, Life and Works of Morgan Edwards (N.Y., Arno Press, 1980), p.13. In 1765, Isaac Backus wrote Dr. Gill a letter asking him to make arrangements to secure "suitable books" for the new Baptist College in Rhode Island. Also in 1765, Robert Carmichael, of Edinburgh (and former Presbyterian of the Church of Scotland), applied to Dr. Gill for regular baptism. In 1765, Gill is found replying to a pamphlet by Dovid Bostwick of New York. This led in turn to a challenge from the Paedobaptists for Dr. Gill to either "expunge or explain" his statement about infant baptism. This was produced in 1766, in the form of the tract now in the reader's hands, Infant-Baptism: A Part and Pillar of Popery. Reuben A. Guild was not far-off when he said of Dr. Gill: "...his reputation was worldwide." Op. cit.

Regarding the **significance** of John Gill and his writings, it will not be amiss to quote the following. William Cathcart said: "...for 51 years Dr. John Gill was a power in London and a religious authority all over Great Britain and America." The Baptist Encyclopedia (Philadelphia, Louis H. Everts, 1881), p. 453. Thomas R. McKibbens and Kenneth C. Smith recently evaluated Dr. John Gill (in his day) as: "...the best known preacher and scholar among Baptists in England....the leading Particular Baptist in England." Op. cit. Richard B. Cook said Dr. John Gill and Rev. John Brine for "nearly half a century were the chief men in the Baptist denomination." The Story of the Baptists in All Ages and Countries (Baltimore, H.M. Wharton, 1884), pp. 189-190. Again, he said: "John Gill, D.D.,...may be ranked as the most learned man in some respects, that has appeared in our denomination." Ibid. Even H.C. Vedder, a critic of Gill, admitted that he was "the ablest and most learned of the Baptists of his time." A Short History of the Baptists (Valley

Forge, Pa., Judson Press, 1902), p. 240. Dr. Gill's writings were particularly "appreciated in the Particular Baptist circles among which he became a prominent authority." Walter Elwell, ed., Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1984), p. 441. So appreciated was he, in fact, that Dr. Gill and his writings were highly praised and repeatedly recommended by famous Baptists on both sides of the Atlantic! William Cathcart leads the van; he said Gill's "Body of Divinity, published in 1769, is a work without which no theological library is complete....Dr. Gill's Commentary is the most valuable exposition of the Old and New Testaments ever published....Gill's Commentary has the largest amount of valuable information ever presented to Christians in the form of Annotations on the Bible. ...Gill knew more of the Bible than any one with whose writings we are acquainted." The Baptist Encyclopedia, pp. 453,454. In a personal letter to Dr. Gill, Dr. Samuel Stillman, of Boston, said: "I have daily reason to bless God for your valuable Exposition of the Old and New Testaments, and for which thousands will bless God after you have ceased from your labors --- a work from which, I doubt not, the church will derive the greatest advantage to the end of time. You, sir, have labored, and we enter into your labors; and by them many of Christ's ministers are far better qualified to unfold the mysteries of the gospel to their hearers." John Rippon, Brief Memoir, p. 59. Spencer H. Cone, famous pastor of the First Baptist Church in New York City, in his advice to young ministers, recommends the writings of John Gill as one of the "standard works" for young ministers to study. Edward W. Cone, Some Account of the Life of Spencer H. Cone (N.Y., Livermore and Rudd, 1856), p. 425. Dr. James Manning, first president of Brown University, in speaking of Gill's Commentary as "a valuable treasure," said: "I will watch every opportunity of making Dr. Gill's works as much known as possible." Again, in a letter to Dr. Gill's son, he said: "You may rest assured that what little influence I possess shall

be employed in the sale of his works." Reuben A. Guild, Early History, pp. 421,422. C.H. Spurgeon adds his testimony in the following note, written in his own handwriting in his set of Gill's Commentary: "Many sneer at Gill, but he is not to be dispensed with. In some respects, he has no superior. He is always worth consulting... 1886." C.H. Spurgeon, Autobiography, Vol. 1, The Early Years, p. 220. Again, C.H. Spurgeon, in ranking Gill fifth among all commentators upon the whole Bible, said: "For good, sound, massive, sober sense in commenting, who can excel Gill?" Commenting and Commentaries (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981), p. 9. Benjamin Wallin (1711-1782, famous English Particular Baptist pastor of the Maze-Pond Church), wrote to Dr. James Manning, of Brown University (in a letter dated July 30, 1773), the following: "As to the works of the great man, the late Dr. Gill, who was truly a father, they may justly be accounted a considerable acquisition. I know not, upon the whole, an author more judicious and consistent." Robert Guild, Early History, p. 239.

In an effort to show that this "agreement with and respect for" the theology of Dr. Gill and his writings is not just gathered from random, scattered individuals, consider the actions of the two oldest Baptist Associations in America --- the Philadelphia (begun in 1707) and the Charleston (begun in 1751). Robert T. Handy says: "The largest and most significant group of Baptists in North America in the eighteenth Century was the Particular or Regular Baptists." Winthrop S. Hudson, editor, Baptist Concepts of the Church (Valley Forge, Pa., Judson Press, 1959), p. 30. According to David Benedict, the Particular or Regular Baptists "are the most ancient, and have always been the most active and influential in all matters." A General History, vol. 2, p. 154. What was true in England, was true in the American Colonies, i.e., the Particular Baptists were "the real forefathers of the modern denomination." J.H. Shakespeare, Baptists and Congregational Pioneers (London, National Council of

Evangelical Free Churches, 1906), pp. 180-183. The Particular Baptists, who were staunchly Calvinistic in theology, embodied their views in the 1st and 2nd London Confessions, 1644 and 1677 respectively. Beginning in 1707, the Particular Baptists in and around Philadelphia (for 400 miles) met regularly at the "Association of Particular Baptist Churches annually held at Philadelphia." This Association formally adopted the 2nd London Confession of 1689 (with two additions) as its own, and ordered it printed in 1742. "Thus the faith and life of the Particular Baptists in America followed the pattern that had been shaped in England in the seventeenth century and retained its strong Calvinistic orientation." Robert T. Handy in Baptist Concepts, p. 31. H.C. Vedder said that the Philadelphia Association, by adopting the 1689, 2nd London Confession as its own, "decided the course of American Baptist History." A Short History, p. 306. Many of the new associations that were formed later, were constructed of churches formerly in the Philadelphia Association and they remained in close company with it. Of the first thirteen Baptist associations formed in the American Colonies, ten adopted the same Calvinistic confession of faith! Therefore, "a focus on the faith and life of the Philadelphia body gives the **KEY** to the whole development of Regular Baptists in America in the eighteenth century." Robert T. Handy, Op. cit., p. 32. In fact, "the 'Paramount' influence of the Philadelphia Association among American Baptists was noted by H.C. Vedder, and he declared that this influence 'fixed the character of the denomination for all time'....it is clear that the main stream of American Baptist life had its source among the Baptists of the Philadelphia Association....they did determine the basic, initial orientation of the denomination both in doctrine and in polity. Thus, any attempt to understand the Baptists of the United States must begin with this group." Winthrop S. Hudson, Baptist Concepts, p. 21.

Now, what was the attitude of this famous Baptist

Association toward Dr. John Gill? They so highly esteemed Dr. Gill as a sound exponent of Baptist theology, that as late as October, 1807, in their official minutes they recommended, as an association, "that each member church of the Association subscribe for a copy of Dr. Gill's incomparable Exposition of the Old and New Testaments for the use of their ministers, and urged all sister associations to aid in the accomplishment of this desirable object." A.D. Gillette, The Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1707-1807, (Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), p. 439. Concerning the attitude of the Charleston Baptist Association toward Dr. Gill, David Benedict relates that as late as 1809, that association "recommended to the churches and the publick [sic] to encourage, by subscription, the undertaking of Mr. Woodward, of Philadelphia, to republish Dr. Gill's Exposition; and each church was advised to provide a copy for the use of its minister." A General History, vol. 2, p. 149.

Finally, upon this point, the real **significance** of Dr. Gill is brought forward by the opinions of those who are not Baptist. John Rippon states that the ministry of Mr. Gill was not only acceptable to his own people, but likewise to many "of different denominations." Brief Memoir, p. xix. Mr. Walter Wilson, a Paedobaptist, author of The History and Antiquities of the Dissenting Churches and Meeting Houses in London, (London, W. Button and Son, 1808), gives the following, after relating the basic facts about Dr. Gill: "Such were the life and death of Dr. Gill, who, for the value and extent of his writings, will be considered by future generations as one of the fathers of the church." We close this point about Dr. Gill's **significance** with the words of another of his contemporaries, Augustus Toplady, an Episcopalian clergyman:

"If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning it was Dr. Gill. His attainments, both in abstruse and polite literature,

were (what is very uncommon) equally extensive and profound. Providence had to this end endued him with a firmness of constitution and an unremitting vigor of mind which rarely fall to the lot of the sedentary and learned. It would, perhaps, try the constitution of half the literati in England only to read, with care and attention, the whole of what he wrote....

The doctor considered not any subject superficially or by halves. As deeply as human sagacity enlightened by grace could penetrate, he went to the bottom of everything he engaged in. With a solidity of judgment and with an acuteness of discernment peculiar to few, he exhausted, as it were, the very soul and substance of most arguments he undertook. His style, too, resembles himself; it is manly, nervous, plain, conscious, if I may so speak, of the unutterable dignity, value, and importance of the freight it conveys, it drives directly and perspicuously to the point in view, regardless of affected cadence, and superior to the little niceties of professed refinement....

His learning and labors, if exceedable, were exceeded only by the invariable sanctity of his life and conversation. From his childhood to his entrance on the ministry, and from his entrance on the ministry to the moment of his dissolution, not one of his most inveterate opposers was ever able to charge him with the least shadow of immorality. Himself, no less than his writings, demonstrated that the doctrine of grace does not lead to licentiousness....

His doctrinal and practical writings will live and be admired,and be a standing blessing to posterity, when their opposers are forgotten, or only remembered by the reputation he has given them. While true religion and sound learning have a single friend remaining in the British empire, the works and name of Gill will be precious and preserved." J.M. Cramp, Baptist History (Philadelphia, The American Baptist Publication Society, 1869), pp. 510-512.

What, then, is the **true significance** and **vital connectedness** (historically and theologically) of Dr. John Gill to the early Colonial Particular Baptists of America? In 1859, the early American Baptist historian, David Benedict, said: "In my early days the Associated Baptists were all professedly Calvinistic in their doctrinal sentiments. The term, however, was not agreeable to many, as they did not subscribe to all the sentiments of John Calvin, but they submitted to it for distinction's sake, and in contradistinction from those whose views were less orthodox on Predestination, etc." 50 Years Among the Baptists (New York, Sheldon and Co., 1860), p. 138. Earlier, in 1813, speaking of the Particular Baptists, Benedict said: "The Particular Baptists are strictly Calvinistic in their creed. But those who are called General, lean to the Arminian System. The FORMER hold that Christ died for the elect only, while the LATTER plead that the Saviour by his death and sufferings, has made salvation possible for all." A General History, vol. 1, pp. 224,225. In further describing the early Colonial Baptists of America, David Benedict said: "The doctrine of the Atonement has been differently understood. The OLD CHURCHES pretty uniformly held that it was PARTICULAR; that is, that Christ died for the ELECT only, and that in his stupendous sufferings, no respect was had to, nor any provision made for, any others of Adam's ruined race. This is called the strict Calvinistic or Gillite plan." Ibid., vol. 2, p. 456. In 1856, Francis Wayland wrote: "Within the last fifty years a change has gradually taken place in the views of a large portion of our brethren. At the commencement of that period (i.e., 1806) Gill's Divinity was a sort of standard....a change commenced upon the publication of the writings of Andrew Fuller." Notes on the Principles and Practices of Baptist Churches (New York, Sheldon, Blakeman and Co., 1857), p. 18. In the 1850's, J.B. Jeter (of Virginia) said: "Fifty years ago, the Baptists mostly adhered to high Calvinism, as maintained by Dr. John Gill of London."

Baptist Principles Reset (Richmond, The Religious Herald Co., 1902), p. 13. From these eye-witness we learn that in around 1800 (+/-) the Regular or Particular Baptists in America were "professedly Calvinistic" and "strictly Calvinistic." They adhered to the "Particular" doctrine of the Atonement... called "the strict Calvinistic or Gillite plan." At this time "Gill's Divinity was a sort of standard" and the Baptists mostly adhered to "high Calvinism, as maintained by Dr. John Gill of London." Little wonder, then, that these early Colonial Baptists have been called Gillite Baptists, for this correctly identifies their Strict Calvinistic theology. But a great change was taking place! Tom J. Nettles states that about this time, "Baptist theology was undergoing 'SLIGHT' but noticeable change." By His Grace, p. 131. However, Mr. Nettle's opinion of this change is not quite the same as Winthrop S. Hudson's opinion. In speaking of this time period in American Baptist history, Hudson stated that the Particular Baptist tradition of the Philadelphia Association in many ways represented, "the main current of American Baptist life throughout the nineteenth century, but it was a tradition that was being 'SHARPLY' modified by the influence of Evangelicalism." Winthrop S. Hudson, editor, Baptist Concepts of the Church, p. 27,28. Dr. Kenneth H. Good's opinion surpasses Hudson's. He said that it was "probably the MOST EXTERNALLY SIGNIFICANT modification of Calvinism to be observed in the English-speaking world." Are Baptists Calvinists?, (Oberlin, Ohio, Regular Baptist Heritage Fellowship, 1975), p. 76. Norman H. Maring quotes Robert Hall, Jr., an 1814 eye-witness, whose description substantiates the above opinion of Winthrop Hudson. Hall says: "...a 'CONSIDERABLE REVOLUTION' has been effected in the sentiments of the denomination." Baptist Concepts of the Church, p. 71. J. B. Jeter described this alteration as "CONSIDERABLY CHANGED." Baptist Principles Reset, p. 13. According to David Benedict, this change and modification that was taking place around 1800 caused quite a stir. In 1859,

Benedict wrote: "Forty years ago large bodies of our people were in a state of FERMENT and AGITATION in consequence of some modifications of their Old Calvinistic creed." Later, in the same article, Benedict said: "...a very IMPORTANT change followed. Finally, in 1859, speaking of his own day, Benedict said: "While our creed...remains the same, this moderating still goes on, in theological training, in ministerial functions, and in public sentiment, and to what point of moderation [change] we shall in time DESCEND, it is difficult to foretell." Fifty Years Among the Baptists, pp. 135,140, 144. If our readers have followed along this far, they have noted how the majority of Colonial Particular Baptists were strictly Calvinistic of the GILLITE standard. Winthrop Hudson describes this majority as "the main stream" and "the main current" of American Baptist life in the nineteenth century. Robert T. Handy describes this majority as "the dominant strand." Baptist Concepts, pp. 21,27,52. Around the turn of the century, i.e., about 1800, a change was coming upon them; a "sharply" modifying change; a "considerable revolution" in their doctrines and practices. It was described as a very "important" change. Now, what was it that caused this agitating modification? What happened to change the sentiments of the Calvinistic Baptists? There were, no doubt, several recognizable factors, but we will take time to address what we believe to be the **major** cause. Let us first listen to the opinion of four Baptists who were contemporary eye-witnesses, then to the opinion of a later historian.

In 1856, our first witness, Francis Wayland, wrote: "Within the last fifty years a change has gradually taken place in the views of a large portion of our brethren. At the commencement of that period Gill's Divinity was a sort of a standard....A change commenced UPON THE PUBLICATION OF THE WRITINGS OF ANDREW FULLER, especially his, Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation, which, in the northern and eastern states, has become almost universal. The old view still prevails, if I mistake not, in our south-

ern and western states." Notes, p. 18.

Our second witness, J.B. Jeter, wrote in the 1850's: "Fifty years ago, the Baptists mostly adhered to high Calvinism, as maintained by Dr. John Gill, of London. Since that time their views have been considerably changed, THROUGH THE WRITINGS OF ANDREW FULLER AND OTHERS." Baptist Principles, p. 13.

Our third contemporary witness in this matter is David Benedict. In 1859, he wrote: "FORTY YEARS AGO large bodies of our people were in a state of ferment and agitation, IN CONSEQUENCE OF SOME MODIFICATIONS OF THEIR OLD CALVINISTIC CREED, AS DISPLAYED IN THE WRITINGS OF THE LATE ANDREW FULLER, of Kettering, England. This famous man maintained that the atonement of Christ was general in its nature, but particular in its application, in opposition to our old divines, who held that Christ died for the elect only....Dr. John Gill, of London, was, in his day, one of the most distinguished divines among the English Baptists, and as he was a noted advocate for the old system of a limited atonement, the terms 'Gillites' and 'Fullerites' were often applied to the parties in this discussion. Those who espoused the views of Mr. Fuller were denominated Arminians by the Gillite men, while they, in turn, styled their opponents Hyper-Calvinists. Both parties claimed to be orthodox and evangelical....Fifty Years, p. 135. Again, Benedict states: "ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FULLER SYSTEM A VERY IMPORTANT CHANGE FOLLOWED on the part of many of our ministers in their mode of addressing their unconverted.... The Fuller system, which makes it consistent for all the heralds of the gospel to call upon men everywhere to repent, was well received by one class of our ministers, but not by the staunch defenders of the old theory of a limited atonement. According to their views, all for whom Christ suffered and died would certainly be effectually called and saved. These conflicting opinions caused altercations of considerable severity for a time, among the Bap-

tists, who had hitherto been all united on the orthodox side. The Gillites maintained that the expositions of Fuller were unsound, and would subvert the genuine gospel faith. If, said they, the atonement of Christ is general in its nature it must be so in its effects, as none of his sufferings will be in vain; and the doctrine of universal salvation will inevitably follow this dangerous creed. While the dispute went on, it was somewhat difficult for the Fullerites to pass muster, on the score of orthodoxy...." Ibid., 140-142.

Our final contemporary witness to the great changes that took place in the doctrines and practices of the Colonial Particular Baptists is Robert Hall, Jr. In 1814, Hall wrote: "A considerable revolution has been effected in the sentiments of the denomination." The Works of Robert Hall, A.M. (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1854), vol. 2, p. 452. This change was attributed by him to "the ADOPTION OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES, advocated by his father and Mr. Fuller, which were commonly called, 'FULLERISM.'" Norman H. Maring, Baptist Concepts, p. 71.

Let us finally give serious consideration to an evaluation of this matter by a later historian, Mr. Winthrop S. Hudson. He said the influence of the Great Awakening represented:

"...an initial penetration of an EVANGELICAL EMPHASIS among American Baptists....The penetration of American Baptist life by what may be identified as a definitely EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY was to stem from the NEW ENGLAND REVIVAL and also from ANDREW FULLER...."

Again, Hudson said the Particular Baptist tradition stemming from the Philadelphia Association represented:

"...the main current of American Baptist life throughout the nineteenth century, but it was a tradition that was being SHARPLY MODIFIED BY THE INFLUENCE OF EVANGELICALISM. The almost complete preoccupation of Evangelicalism with the conversion experience and heart-religion led to an emphasis

that was quite compatible with any form of church order, for it was essentially indifferent to the outward structures of church life and to the theological considerations which undergirded them.... Thus the effect of EVANGELICALISM, over the course of the nineteenth century, was slowly to erode the theological foundations on which the customary practices and usages of American Baptists were based. This, in turn, was to make it possible for American Baptists in the twentieth century to indulge in uninhibited experimentation and improvisation. With the DISAPPEARANCE OF ANY STRONG SUSTAINING TRADITION and with the increasing inability to explain theologically the characteristic features of their developing church life, the result was the loss of a sense of denominational identity that was both confusing and demoralizing." Baptist Concepts, pp. 22,27,28.

What, then, are the testimonies of our witnesses as to the major causes of the great change in the doctrines and practices of the Colonial Particular Baptists? "The publication of the writings of Andrew Fuller" --- "the writings of Andrew Fuller and others" --- "some modifications of their old Calvinistic creed as displayed in the writings of the late Andrew Fuller" --- "the introduction of the Fuller system" --- "the adoption of certain principles, advocated by Robert Hall, Sr. and Andrew Fuller, which were commonly called, 'Fullerism.'"

What, then, is the **true significance** and **vital connectedness** (historically and theologically) of Dr. John Gill to the early Colonial Baptists of America? In Dr. Gill, we find not only "the leading spokesman" for the Particular Baptists of Britain, but also a recognized standard for the doctrinal and practical identity of the Colonial Baptists. In his theology, we find the standard doctrinal and practical identity of the Colonial Baptists. The Calvinistic Baptists of the Philadelphia Association were Gillite Baptists who advocated the strict Calvinistic or Gillite Plan of the Atonement. In the theo-

logy of John Gill, we have the distinctive doctrinal identity of the Colonial Baptists prior to the invasion of the theology of Andrew Fuller. In John Gill, we find a concrete historical and theological standard by which to assess what actually took place in the sentiments of the Colonial Baptists with the invasion and penetration of the concepts of the New England Revival and the principles of Andrew Fuller. In the theology of John Gill, we find, made plain for all to see, the very distinct difference between Fullerite Arminianism dressed in the profession of free and sovereign grace, and the theology of free and sovereign grace itself. Make no mistake, Fullerism is Arminianism. H.C. Vedder judged it to be so, when he said that Andrew Fuller: "...boldly accepted and advocated a doctrine of the atonement that, until his day, had always been stigmatized as **rank Arminianism**, viz., that the atonement of Christ, as to its worth and dignity, was sufficient for the sins of the whole world, and was not an offering for the elect alone, as **Calvinists of all grades** had hitherto maintained. Along with this naturally went a sublapsarian interpretation of the 'doctrines of grace,' and this **modified Calvinism** gradually made its way among Baptists until it has become well-nigh the only doctrine known among them." A Short History, p. 249.

The majority of Baptist writers of today praise Fuller as theologically sound, and criticize Gill as a Hyper-Calvinist. Even some Calvinistic Baptists do this, each with his own flair. Kenneth H. Good praises Fuller for rescuing the Particular Baptists from "...self-destruction and oblivion...a form of Calvinism both stagnant and sterile...Christianized fatalism...hyper-Calvinism." Are Baptists Calvinists?, p. 76. Mr. Good explains how Fuller did this: by "...probably the most externally significant modification of Calvinism to be observed in the English-speaking world." Ibid. However, on the next page, Mr. Good changes his statement. He states that the views of Fuller were not a modification of Calvinism at all, but "Calvinism" itself. Ibid., p.

77. A little later, Mr. Good states that Fuller's views could be better understood as **"clarifications of distinctions** [rather] than **modifications.**" Ibid., p. 81. What Mr. Good wants us to believe is that Andrew Fuller was an average Calvinist, a consistent Calvinist, and that all Calvinistic Baptists should believe like Andrew Fuller.

Thomas J. Nettles, in his book, By His Grace, does not criticize Gill. In fact, in chapter 2 of his book, he defends John Gill in an admirable fashion. However, in the next chapter of his book, he defends Andrew Fuller! In his defense of Fuller, Nettles says:

"An examination of Fuller's theology demonstrates his UNSWERVING ALIGNMENT with historic Calvinism in theology and methodology....Fuller REMAINED CONSISTENT to historic Calvinism in his view of the Atonement....Fuller proposes an atonement consistent with the formula 'sufficient for all but efficient only for the elect.' This position does not place Fuller in a unique position or in any way isolate him as an amender of the historic Reformed understanding of limited atonement. He is in complete harmony with one way that consistent Calvinists have expounded that doctrine....to label Fuller as out of step with the historical understanding of limited atonement, or to construe his position as intentionally more sympathetic with universal or general atonement, would totally miss Fuller's point."

You will distinctly notice that Nettles denies that Andrew Fuller was an "amender" of the historic understanding of limited atonement. Later, however, in discussing the Baptist theology of the 1800's, Nettles says: "Baptist theology was undergoing slight but noticeable change as the differences that existed between John Gill and Andrew Fuller were heightened by each man's followers. Although little substantial difference existed between the respective systems, several observers remarked about the changes of the first half of the century." By His Grace, pp. 111,121,123,131.

Do not let our readers be mistaken! We have no animosity toward Dr. Kenneth H. Good and Dr. Thomas J. Nettles **personally**. We appreciate their efforts to call to the attention of the Baptist people in America the history of their theology; however, we believe them to be wrong **theologically** regarding Andrew Fuller's system. We would emphasize the distinct difference between the "Calvinism" of Andrew Fuller and Biblical free grace. Since it is by "their fruits" we know them, and since by everyone's testimony, the Fuller system has almost totally prevailed among the Baptists everywhere, let them consider what such a system has brought us to!

The point we make here is that the testimony of H.C. Vedder just related above, disagrees with Mr. Good's and Mr. Nettles'. Mr. Vedder says Fullerism was a "MODIFIED CALVINISM." A Short History, p. 249. But Mr. Vedder's testimony does not stand alone. In Wm. Cathcart's Baptist Encyclopedia, p. 422, we read: "His views of the atonement, however, WERE INNOVATIONS to the English Baptists of his day, which stirred VIGOROUS OPPOSITION." Winthrop S. Hudson said that the Calvinistic tradition of the Particular Baptists of the Philadelphia Association was "SHARPLY MODIFIED" by the influence of Fuller's evangelicalism. Baptist Concepts, p. 27,28. Robert Hall, Jr., said that a "CONSIDERABLE REVOLUTION has been effected" in the Calvinistic sentiments of the Baptists by the adoption of certain principles of Mr. Fuller. Ibid., p. 71. J.B. Jeter said that the Calvinistic views of the Colonial Baptists have been "CONSIDERABLY CHANGED" through the writings of Andrew Fuller. Baptist Principles Reset, p. 13. Therefore, our conclusion (regardless of Andrew Fuller's claims to the contrary) is that Fullerism is a modified Calvinism." Yea, even more, Vedder said Fuller "...advocated a doctrine of the atonement that...had always been stigmatized as RANK ARMINIANISM." A Short History, p. 249. David Benedict states that "...those who espoused the views of Mr. Fuller were denominated ARMINIANS" by the Gillite Baptists. Fifty Years, p. 135. Again, he states

that, when the Fullerite question: "Is salvation by Christ made possible for every individual of the human race?" came to the attention of the Sandy Creek Association in 1775, "those who supported the affirmative of this question were called ARMINIANS, while those who maintained the opposition opinion were denominated CALVINISTS." A General History, vol. 1, p. 56. And finally, Mr. Benedict makes the following observation: "The Particular Baptists are strictly Calvinistic in their creed. But those who are called General Baptists, lean to the Arminian system. The FORMER hold that Christ died for the elect only, while the LATTER plead that the Saviour by his death and sufferings has made salvation possible for all. Dr. Fuller, the author of The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation, is a Particular Baptist; some of his brethren have adopted his notion of the atonement, others have opposed it, AND THE TIME HAS BEEN, WHEN HE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN TURNED OVER TO THE GENERAL SIDE." Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 224,225.

As we said before, make no mistake, Fullerism is Arminianism, notwithstanding the testimonies of Mr. Good and Mr. Nettles to the contrary! Vedder saw it that way. Cathcart and Benedict saw it that way, and the early Calvinistic Particular Baptists saw it that way. What, then, is the **true significance** and **vital connectedness** (historically and theologically) of Dr. John Gill to the early Colonial Particular Baptists of America? John Gill and Andrew Fuller, in their diverse ways, became major figures in shaping the thought and life of American Baptists.

In Andrew Fuller, we find "a representative leader of the new evangelicalism," the modified Calvinism, the rank Arminianism which was penetrating the Baptist ranks of this time. In Dr. John Gill, we find "the ablest and most learned of the Baptists of his time," --- "the acknowledged leader among his brethren" --- "the best-known preacher and scholar among the Baptists" --- "the leading Particular Baptist" --- and, possibly, "the most learned man, in some respects, that has appeared in our denomination" --- "whose learning and labors were exceeded

only by the invariable sanctity of his life and conversation." In Dr. John Gill, we find a real, Calvinistic Particular Baptist, "standing in the Old Paths" and "earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Are the works of Dr. John Gill **significant** for today's Calvinistic Baptists? My reader, let truthfulness judge! Let honesty answer!

The book in the reader's hand is about infant baptism. The question of whether infants should be baptized (i.e., who are the proper subject for baptism?) is intrinsically complicated, because it is impossible to answer it properly without taking into consideration the larger question of your view of the nature of baptism itself, i.e., its purpose and efficacy. This, then, involves your view of the whole matter of salvation. So, the question about infant baptism involves a conglomerate, or group of questions. Therefore, until we are settled in proper views of salvation, it will be impossible to view infant baptism properly. On the other hand, proper views of baptism will lead to, and amplify proper views of salvation. Consequently, he who has the most thorough grasp upon the major doctrines of Scripture, should be most able to clarify the infant baptism question. Taking into consideration, then, the nature of the whole question, and the life, character and abilities of Dr. John Gill, today's Calvinistic Baptists should most certainly study his works upon the infant-baptism question, not just because they are so **voluminous**, but because they are, in and of themselves, so **significant**.

We appreciate ever so much the works of the great Puritans and Protestants. In some areas of theology, their writings are excellent. However, the Scriptures will always demand, and the public will ever judge --- consistency. The basis of all rational thought and communication is the Principle of Non-contradiction. As long as man's mind is constructed as it is, consistency will remain a bedrock for rational discourse. Something cannot exist and not exist at the same time; it cannot be

and not be at the same moment. Therefore, salvation is by grace, or by works, as Paul said in Rom. 11:6. If we say it is by grace, then consistency demands we live accordingly. We cannot preach salvation by grace and practice salvation by works: "...otherwise grace is no more grace." This, to us, is exactly what all Protestants do in their Ecclesiology, and no amount of fraternal good-will --- nor certainly Christian love --- can overlook this naked inconsistency, for "love rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth" (1 Cor. 13:6). The demand for consistency is not popular: on the other hand, for those who love the Word of God, neither is it optional (Lk. 6:46; Jn. 14:21-24)! The Temple of Evangelical Union between Protestants and Strict Baptists can only be built upon the smoldering ruins of surrendered Biblical truth, and the rejection of rational, consistent thought. And if this be the case, may it never be built! May the Lord grant grace to us to avoid, yea, to oppose such a union by every means! Ecclesiology is the proving-ground for our Theology, and this, in the end, is the real issue. All claims notwithstanding, what is the real nature of our Theology --- salvation by works, or salvation by free and sovereign grace?

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (2 Tim. 2:7).

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Ps. 60:4,5; Is. 59:19; 62:10-12

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NOTE: Material in this Foreword that is emphasized by the use of ALL CAPITALS or **bold print** is by the discretion of the Publisher.

INFANT-BAPTISM:

A

Part and Pillar of Popery.

Being called upon, in a public manner, to give proof of what I have said concerning infant-baptism, in a preface to my reply to Mr. Clarke's Defense, etc. [A Defense of the Divine Right of Infant Baptism, etc., Peter Clark, Boston, 1752] or to expunge it, I readily agree to the former, and shall endeavor to explain myself, and defend what I have written; but it will be proper first to recite the whole paragraph, which stands thus: "The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough reformation in religion; until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline

will be restored to their primitive lustre and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when "The Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one." Now the whole of this consists of several articles or propositions, which I shall re-consider in their order.

I. **That infant baptism is a part and pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations:** I use the phrase **infant-baptism** here and throughout, because of the common use of it; otherwise the practice which now obtains, may with greater propriety be called **infant-sprinkling.** That, unwritten traditions with the **Papists** are equally the rule of faith and practice, as the holy Scriptures, will not be doubted of by any conversant with their writings. The Council of Trent asserts that "Traditions respecting both faith and manners orally delivered and preserved successfully in the Catholic church, are to be received with equal affection of piety and reverence as the books of the Old and New Testaments." (Sess. 4, Decret. de Canon. Script.); yea the **Popish** writers prefer traditions to the Scriptures. Bellarmine says, "Scriptures without tradition, are neither simply necessary, nor sufficient, but unwritten traditions are necessary. Tradition alone is sufficient, but the Scriptures are not sufficient." De Verbo Dei., c. 4, sect. 1, 6. Another of their writers asserts, that "The authority of ecclesiastic traditions is more fit than the scriptures to ascertain anything

doubtful, even that which may be made out from scripture, since the common opinion of the church and ecclesiastical tradition are clearer, and more open and truly inflexible; when, on the contrary, the scriptures have frequently much obscurity in them, and may be drawn here and there like a nose of wax; and, as a leaden rule, may be applied to every impious opinion." Pighius apud Rivet. Cathol. Orthodox., Tract 1, p. 99. Bailey the Jesuit, thus expresses himself, "I will go further and say, we have as much need of tradition as of scripture, yea more; because the scripture ministers to us only the dead and mute letter, but tradition, by means of the ministry of the church, gives us the true sense, which is not had distinctly in the scripture; wherein, notwithstanding, rather consists the word of God than in the alone written letter; it is sufficient for a good Catholic, if he understands it is tradition, nor need he to inquire after anything else." Apud ib., p. 142.; and by **tradition**, they mean not tradition delivered in the Scripture, but distinct from it and out of it; unwritten tradition, apostolical tradition, as they frequently call it, not delivered by the apostles in the sacred Scriptures, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches; that we may not mistake them. Andradius tells us, "That of necessity those traditions also must be believed, which can be proved by no testimony of scripture:" and Petrus a Soto still more plainly and openly affirms: "It is," says he, "a rule infallible and catholic, that whatsoever things the church of Rome believeth, holdeth and keepeth, and are not delivered in the scriptures, the same came by tradition from the apostles;

also all such observations and ceremonies, whose beginning, author, and original are not known, or cannot be found, out of all doubt they were delivered by the apostles." (See the Abstracts of the History of Popery, Part 2, pp. 252,253.) This is what is meant by apostolic tradition.

Now the essentials of popery, or the peculiarities of it, are all founded upon this, even upon apostolic and ecclesiastic tradition; this is the Pandora from whence they all spring; this is the rule to which all are brought, and by which they are confirmed; and what is it, be it ever so foolish, impious and absurd, but what may be proved hereby, if this is admitted of as a rule and test? It is upon this foot the Papists assert and maintain the observation of Easter, on the Lord's Day following the 14th of March, the fast of Quadragesima or Lent, the adoration of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the worship of the sign of the cross, the sacrifices of the mass, transubstantiation, the abrogation of the use of the cup in the Lord's Supper, holy water, extreme unction or the chrism, prayers for the dead, auricular confession, sale of pardons, purgatory, pilgrimages, monastic vows, etc.

Among apostolical traditions infant-baptism is to be reckoned, and it is upon this account it is pleaded for. The first person that asserted infant-baptism and approved it, represents it as a tradition from the apostles, whether he be Origen, or his translator and interpolator, Ruffinus; his words are, "For this (i.e., for original sin) the church has received a tradition from the apostles, even to give baptism unto infants." Origin. Comment. in Epist. and Roman., Bk.5, fol. 178. I.

Austin, who was a warm advocate for infant-baptism, puts it upon this footing, as a custom of the church, not to be despised, and as an apostolic tradition generally received by the church (De Genef., Bk.10, c.21, et De Baptismo Contr. Donat., Bk. 4, c. 23,24); he lived in the fourth century, the same Ruffinus did; and probably it was from his Latin translation of Origen, Austin took the hint of infant-baptism being an apostolic tradition, since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it before as such; so that, as as Bishop Taylor observes, "This apostolical tradition is but a testimony of one person, and he condemned of many errors; so that, as he says, to derive this from the apostles on no greater authority, is a great argument that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment." (Liberty of Prophesying, p. 320); and yet it is by this that many are determined in this affair: and not only Popish writers, as Bellarmine and others make it to be an apostolical tradition unwritten; but some Protestant-Paedobaptists show a good will to place infant-baptism among the unwritten sayings and traditions of Christ or His apostles, and satisfy themselves therewith. Mr. Fuller says, "We do freely confess that there is neither express **precept** nor **precedent** in the New Testament for the baptizing of infants;" yet observes that St. John saith, ch. 21:25, "And there are also many other things, which Jesus did, which are not written; among, which for ought appears to the contrary, the baptizing of these infants (those whom Christ took in his arms and blessed) might be one of them." Infants Advocate, p. 71,150. In

like manner, Mr. Walker argues, "It doth not follow our Savior gave no precept for the baptizing of infants, because no such precept is particularly expressed in the scripture; for our Savior spoke many things to his disciples concerning the kingdom of God, both before his passion, and also after his resurrection, which are not written in the scriptures; and who can say, but that among those many unwritten sayings of his, there might be an express precept for infant-baptism?" Modest Plea, p. 268. And Mr. Leigh, one of the disputants in the Portsmouth-Disputation, suggests, that though infant-baptism is not to be found in the writings of the apostle Paul extant in the scriptures, yet it might be in some writings of his which are lost, and not now extant (Narrative of the Portsmouth Disputation, p. 16,17,18); all which is plainly giving up infant-baptism as contained in the sacred writings, and placing it upon unwritten, apostolical tradition, and that too, conjectural and uncertain.

Now infant-baptism, with all the ceremonies attending it, for which also apostolical tradition is pleaded, makes a very considerable figure in the Popish pageantry; which according to pretended apostolical tradition, is performed in a very pompous manner, as by consecration of the water, using sponsors, who answer to the interrogatories, and make the renunciation in the name of the infant, exorcisms, exsufflations, crossings, the use of salt, spittle, and oil. Before the party is baptized, the water is consecrated in a very solemn manner; the priest makes an exorcism first; three times, he exsufflates or breathes into the water, in the figure of a cross, saying, "I adjure thee,

O creature of water;" and here he divides the water after the manner of a cross, and makes three or four crossings; he takes a horn of oil, and pours it three times upon the water in the likeness of a cross, and makes a prayer, that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal trinity be present; saying, "Descend from heaven and sanctify this water, and give grace and virtue, that he who is baptized according to the command of thy Christ, may be crucified, and die, and be buried, and rise again with him." The sponsors, or sureties, instead of the child, and in its name, recite the creed and the Lord's prayer, make the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and answer to questions put in the name of the child: the form, according to the Roman order, is this: "The name of the infant being called, the presbyter must say, Dost thou renounce Satan? A. I do renounce; and all his works? A. I do renounce; and all his pomps? A. I do renounce: three times these questions are put, and three times the sureties answer." The interrogations are sometimes said to be made by a priest, sometimes by a presbyter, and sometimes by an exorcist, who was one or the other, and to which the following question also was added: "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, etc.? A. I believe." Children to be baptized are first exsufflated or breathed and blown upon and exorcised, that the wicked spirit might be driven from them, that they might be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ: the Roman order is, "Let him (the minister, priest, deacon or exorcist) blow into the face of the person to be baptized, three

times, saying, Go out thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." The form, according to St. Gregory, is, "I exorcise thee, O unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou go out and depart from this servant of God." Salt also is put into the mouth of the infant, after it is blessed and exorcised, as a token of its being seasoned with the salt of wisdom; and that it might be preserved from the corruption and ill savor of sin: the priest first blesses the salt after this manner: "I exorcise thee, O creature of salt; and then being blessed, it is put into the mouth of the infant saying, Receive the salt of wisdom unto life everlasting." The nose and ears of infants at their baptism are touched with spittle by the priest, that they may receive the savor of the knowledge of God, and their ears be opened to hear the commands of God; and formerly spittle was put upon the eyes and upon the tongue, though it seems now disused as to those parts; and yet no longer than the birth of King James the First, it seems to have been in use; since at his baptism his mother sent word to the archbishop to forbear the use of the spittle, saying, "She would not have a pocky priest to spit in her child's mouth," (Abstract of the History of Popery, Part 1, p. 114); for it seems the queen knew that the archbishop, who was Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, then had the venereal disease (Vid. Rivet. Animadv. in Grot. Annotat. in Cassander. Consultat., p. 72). And so in the times of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days; for Robert Smith, the martyr, being asked by Bonner, in what point do we dissent from the word of God? meaning as to baptism; he

answered, "First, in hallowing your water, in conjuring of the same, in baptizing children with anointing and spitting in their mouths, mingled with salt, and many other lewd ceremonies, of which not one point is able to be proved in God's word." Fox's Acts and Monuments, Vol. 3, p. 400). All which he calls a mingle mangle. Chrism, or anointing both before and after baptism, is another ceremony used at it; the parts anointed are the breast and shoulders; the breast, that no remains of the latent enemy may reside in the party baptized; and the shoulders, that he may be fortified and strengthened to do good works to the glory of God: this anointing is made in the form of a cross; the oil is put on the breast and beneath the shoulders, making a cross with the thumb; on making the cross on the shoulders, the priest says, "Flee, thou unclean spirit, give honor to the living and true God;" and when he makes it on the breast, he says, "Go out, thou unclean spirit, give place to the Holy Ghost:" the form used in doing it is "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, that thou mayest have life everlasting." The next ceremony is that of signing the infant with the sign of the cross: this is made in several parts of the body, especially on the forehead, to signify that the party baptized should not be ashamed of the cross of Christ, and not be afraid of the enemy Satan, but manfully fight against him. After baptism, in ancient times, honey and milk, or wine and milk, were given to the baptized, though now disused; and infants were admitted to the Lord's Supper, which continued some hundreds of years in the **Latin** church, and still does in the **Greek** church. Now for the proof of the use of

these various ceremonies, the reader may consult Joseph Vicecomes, a learned Papist as Dr. Wall calls him, in his Treatise de Antiquis Baptismi Ritibus ac Ceremoniis, where and by whom they are largely treated of, and the proofs of them given. All which are rehearsed and condemned by the ancient Waldenses in a treatise of theirs, written in the year 1120 (See Morland's History of the Churches of Piedmont, p. 173). It may be asked to what purpose is this account given of the ceremonies used by Papists in the administration of baptism to infants by them, since they are not used by Protestant-paedobaptists? I answer, it is to show what I proposed, namely, what a figure infant-baptism, with these attending ceremonies, makes in **popery**, and may with propriety be called a part of it; besides though all these ceremonies are not used, yet some of them are used in some Protestant-paedobaptist churches, as sureties, the interrogations made to them, and their answers in the name of infants; the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and signing with the sign of the cross; and since these and the others, all of them claim apostolic authority, and most, if not all of them, have as good and as early a claim to it as infant-baptism itself; those who admit that upon this foot, ought to admit these ceremonies also. See a treatise of mine, called The Argument from Apostolic Tradition in Favor of Infant-baptism Considered. Most of the above ceremonies are mentioned by Basil, who lived in the 4th century, and as then in use, and which were had from apostolic tradition as said, and not from the scriptures; and says he, "Because this is first and most common, I will mention it in the first place, as

that we sign with the sign of the cross; --- Who has taught this in Scripture? --- We consecrate the water of baptism and the oil of unction as well as him who receives baptism; from what scriptures? Is it not from private and secret tradition? Moreover the anointing with oil, what passage in scripture teaches this? Now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived or delivered? Also the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce Satan and his angels, from what scripture have we it? Is not this from private and secret tradition?" De Spiritu Sancto, c. 27. And so Austin speaks of exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, as of ancient tradition, and of universal use in the church (De Peccat. Orig., Bk. 2, c. 40; De Nupt. & Concup., Bk. 1, c. 20 and Bk. 2, c. 18). Now whoever receives infant-baptism on the foot of apostolic tradition, ought to receive those also, since they stand upon as good a foundation as that does.

The Papists attribute the rise of several of the above ceremonies to their popes, as sponsors, chrisms, exorcisms, etc., though perhaps they were not quite so early as they imagine, yet very early they were; and infant-baptism itself, though two or three doctors of the church had asserted and espoused it, yet it was not determined in any council until the Milevitan Council in 418, or thereabouts, a provincial of Africa, in which was a canon made for Paedobaptism and never till then: So says Bishop Taylor (Liberty of Prophesying, p.320,321), with whom Grotius (Comment. on Matt. xix.14) agrees, who calls it the Council of Carthage; and who says in the councils no earlier mention is made of infant-baptism than in that coun-

cil; the canons of which were sent to Pope Innocent the First (Vid. Centuriat. Magdeburg. cent. 5, c. 9, p. 468, 473; and Epist. August. Ep., 92,93), and confirmed by him: And Austin, who must write his book against the Donatists before this time, though he says the church always held it (infant-baptism) and that it is most rightly believed to be delivered by apostolic tradition (De Baptismo Contra Donatist., Bk. 4, c. 24); yet observes that it was not instituted, or determined and settled in or by councils; that is, as yet it was not, though it afterwards was in the above council confirmed by the said pope; in which council Austin himself presided, and in which is this canon, "Also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized, --- let him be anathema," and which is the first council that established infant-baptism, and anathematized those that denied it; so that it may justly be called a part of popery: besides baptism by immersion, which continued 1300 years in the Latin church, excepting in the case of the Clinicks, and still does in the Greek church, was first changed into sprinkling by the Papists; which is not an indifferrent thing, whether performed with much or a little water, as it is usually considered; but is of the very essence of baptism, is that itself, and without which it is not baptism; it being as Sir John Floyer says, **no circumstance, but the very act of baptizing** (Essay to Restore Dipping, etc., p. 44); who observes that aspersion, or sprinkling, was brought into the church by the Popish schoolmen (Ibid., p. 58), and our dissenters, adds he, had it from them; the schoolmen employed their thoughts how to find out reasons for the

alteration to sprinkling, brought it into use in the 12th century: and it must be observed, to the honor of the Church of England, that they have not established **sprinkling** in baptism to this day; only have permitted **pouring** in case it is certified the child is weakly and not able to bear dipping; otherwise, by the Rubric, the priest is ordered to **dip** the child **warily**: sprinkling received only a Presbyterian sanction in times of the civil war, by the Assembly of Divines; where it was carried for sprinkling against dipping by one vote only, by 25 against 24, and then established by an ordinance of Parliament, 1644 (Essay to Restore Dipping, etc., p. 12, 32): and that this change has its rise from the authority of the Pope, Dr. Wall (History of Infant-Baptism, Part 2., p. 477) himself acknowledges, and that the sprinkling of infants is from popery. "All the nations of Christians," says he, "that do now, or formerly did, submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling; and though the English received not this custom till after the decay of Popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor-nations as had began it in the times of the pope's power; but all other Christians in the world, who never owned the pope's usurped power, do, and ever did, **dip** their infants in their ordinary use;" so that infant-baptism, both with respect to subjects and mode, may with great propriety be called a part and branch of popery.

But it is not only a **part** of popery, and so serves to strengthen it, as a part does the whole; but it is a **pillar** of it, what serves greatly to support it; and which furnishes the Papists with one of

the strongest arguments against the Protestants in favor of their traditions, on which, as we have seen, the essentials of popery are founded, and of the authority of the church to alter the rites of divine worship: they sadly embarrass Paedobaptist Protestants with the affair of infant-baptism, and urge them either to prove it by scripture, both with respect to mode and subjects, or allow of unscriptural traditions and the authority of the church, or give it up; and if they can allow of unwritten traditions, and the custom and practice of the church, as of authority in one point, why not in others? This way of arguing, as Mr. Stennet (Answers to Ruffen, p. 173, etc.) observes, is used by Cardinal Du Perron, in his reply to the answer of King James the First, and by Mr. John Ainsworth, against Mr. Henry Ainsworth, in the dispute between them, and by Fisher the Jesuit, against Archbishop Laud; a late instance of this kind, he adds, we have in the controversy between Monsieur Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, and a learned anonymous writer, said to be Monsieur de la Roque, late pastor of the reformed church at Roan in Normandy. The Bishop, in order to defend the withholding the cup in the Lord's Supper from the laity, according to the authority of the church, urged that infant-baptism, both as to mode and subject, was unscriptural, and solely by the authority of tradition and custom, with which the pretended Reformed complied, and therefore why not in the other case; which produced this ingenuous confession from his antagonist, that to baptize by **sprinkling** was certainly an **abuse** derived from the **Romish** church, without due examination, as well as many other things, which he and his brethren

were resolved to correct, and thanked the bishop for undeceiving them; and freely confessed, that as to the baptism of infants, there is nothing formal or express in the gospel to justify the necessity of it; and that the passages produced do at most only prove that it is permitted, or rather, that it is not forbidden to baptize them. In the times of King Charles the Second, lived Mr. Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist minister, famous for his talent at disputation, of whom the king having heard, sent for him to dispute with a Romish priest; the which he did before the king and many others, in the habit of a clergyman: Mr. Ives pressed the priest closely, showing the whatever antiquity they pretended to, their doctrine and practices could by no means be proved apostolic; since they are not to be found in any writings which remain of the apostolic age; the priest, after much wrangling, in the end replied, that this argument of Mr. Ives was as of much force against infant-baptism, as against the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome: to which Mr. Ives answered, that he readily granted what he said to be true; the priest upon this broke up the dispute, saying, he had been cheated, and that he would proceed no further; for he came to dispute with a clergyman of the established church, and it was now evident that this was an Anabaptist preacher. This behavior of the priest afforded his majesty and all present not a little diversion (Crosby's History of the Baptists, vol. 4, pp. 247,248): and as Protestant Paedobaptists are urged by this argument to admit the unwritten traditions of the Papists; so dissenters of the Paedobaptist persuasion are pressed upon the same footing by

those of the Church of England to comply with the ceremonies of that church, retained from the church of Rome, particularly by Dr. Whitby; who having pleaded for some condescension to be made to dissenters, in order to reconcile them to the church, adds: "and on the other hand, says he, if notwithstanding the evidence produced, that **baptism** by **immersion**, is suitable both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life; as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of that rite: I say, if notwithstanding this, all our dissenters (i.e., who are Paedobaptists, he must mean) do agree to **sprinkle** the **baptized infant**; why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? for, since it is as lawful to add unto Christ's institutions a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony, which he or his apostles instituted; and use another in its stead, which they never did institute; what reason can they have to do the latter, and yet refuse submission to the former? and why should not the peace and union of the church be as prevailing with them, to perform the one, as is their mercy to the infant's body to neglect the other?" Protestant Reconciler, p. 289. Thus infant-baptism is used as the grand plea for compliance with the ceremonies both of the church of **Rome** and of the church of **England.**

I have added in the preface referred to, where stands the above clause, that infant-baptism is "**that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations;**" which is abudantly

evident, since by the christening of children through baptism, introduced by him, he has made whole countries and nations Christians, and has christened them by the name of christendom; and thereby has enlarged his universal church, over which he claims an absolute power and authority, as being Christ's vicar on earth; and by the same means he retains his influence over nations, and keeps them in awe and in obedience to him; asserting that by their baptism they are brought into the pale of the church, in which there is salvation, and out of which there is none; if therefore they renounce their baptism, received in infancy, or apostasize from the church, their damnation is inevitable; and thus by his menaces and anathemas, he holds the nations in subjection to him: and when they at any time have courage to oppose him, and act in disobedience to his supreme authority, he immediately lays a whole nation under an interdict; by which are prohibited, the administration of the sacraments, all public prayers, burials, christenings, etc., church-doors are locked up, the clergy dare not or will not administer any offices of their function to any, but such as for large sums of money obtain special privileges from Rome for that purpose (Abstract of the History of Popery, Part 1, p. 463. See Fox's Acts and Monuments, Vol. 1, p. 326.): now by means of these prohibitions, and particularly of christening or baptizing children, nations are obliged to comply and yield obedience to the bishop of Rome; for it appears most dreadful to parents, that their children should be deprived of baptism, by which they are made Christians, as they are taught to believe, and without which there

is no hope of salvation; and therefore are influenced to give-in to anything for the sake of what is thought so very important. Once more, the baneful influence spread by Antichrist over the nations by infant-baptism, is that poisonous notion infused by him, that sacraments, particularly baptism, confer grace **ex opere operato**, by the work done; that it takes away sin, regenerates men, and saves their souls; this is charged upon him, and complained of by the ancient Waldenses in a tract of theirs, written in the year 1120, where speaking of the works of Antichrist, they say, "the third work of Antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the Holy Spirit unto the dead, outward work, baptizing children in that faith, and teaching that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had; and therein he confers and bestows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit," (Apud Morland's History of the Churches of Piedmont, p. 148): and which popish notion is argued against and exposed by Robert the martyr (Fox's Acts and Monuments, v. 3, p. 400); on Bonner's saying "if they (infants) die, before they are baptized, they be damned;" he asked this question, "I pray you, my lord, shew me, are we saved by water or by Christ?" to which Bonner replied, "by both;" "then," said Smith, "the water died for our sins, and so must ye say, that the water hath life, and it being our servant, and created for us, is our Savior; this my lord is a good doctrine, is it not?" and this pernicious notion still continues, this old leaven yet remains even in some **Protestant** churches, who have retained it from **Rome**; hence a child when baptized is

declared to be regenerate; and it is taught, when capable of being catechized to say, that in its baptism it was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, which has a tendency to take off all concern, in persons when grown up, about an inward work of grace, in regeneration and sanctification, as a meetness for heaven, and to encourage a presumption in them, notwithstanding their apparent want of grace, that they are members of Christ, and shall never perish; are children and heirs of God, and shall certainly inherit eternal life. Wherefore Dr. [John] Owen rightly observes "That the father of lies himself could not easily have devised a doctrine more pernicious, or what proposes a more present and effectual poison to the minds of sinners to be drank in by them." Theologoumena, Bk. 6, c. 3, p. 477.

II. The second article or proposition in the preface is, as asserted by me, that infant-baptism "**is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together;**" than which nothing is more evident: if a church is national, it consists of all in the nation, men, women, and children; and children are originally members of it, either so by birth, and as soon as born, being born in the church, in a Christian land and nation, which is the church, or rather by baptism, as it is generally put; so according to the order of the Church of England, at the baptism of a child, the minister says, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock." And by the Assembly of Divines, "Baptism is called a sacrament of the New Testament, whereby the parties

baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church." And to which there is a strange contradiction in the following answer, where it is said, that "baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church;" but if by baptism the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, then before baptism by which they are admitted, they must be out of it: one or other must be wrong; either persons are not admitted into the visible church by baptism, or if they are, then before baptism they are out of it, and have baptism administered to them in order to their being admitted into it; and Calvin says, according to whose plan of church-government at Geneva, that of the Scotch church is planned, that baptism is a solemn introduction to the church of God (Epist. Calvin. Ep. ad. N.S.D., p. 441). And Mr. Baxter argues, that "if there be neither precept nor example of admitting church-members in all the New Testament but by baptism; then all that are now admitted ought to come in by baptism; but there is neither precept nor example in all the New Testament of admitting church members but by baptism; therefore they ought to come in the same way now." So then infants becoming members of a national church by baptism, they are originally of it; are the materials of which it consists; and it is by the baptism of infants it is supplied with members, and is supported and maintained; so that it may be truly said, that infant-baptism is the basis and foundation of a national church, and is indeed the sinews, strength, and support of it: and infants being admitted members by baptism continue such when grown up, even though of the most dissolute lives and conversations, as multi-

tudes of them are; and many, instead of being treated as church members, deserve to be sent to the house of correction, as some are, and others are guilty of such flagitious crimes that they die an infamous death; yet even these die in the communion of the church; and thus the church and the world are united and kept together till death doth them part.

The Independents would indeed separate the church and the world according to their principles; but cannot do it, being fettered and hampered with infant-church-membership and baptism, about which they are at a loss and disagreed on what to place it; some place it on infants' interest in the covenant of grace; and here they sadly contradict themselves or one another; at one time they say it is interest in the covenant of grace gives infants a right to baptism, and at another time, that it is by baptism they are brought and entered into the covenant; and sometimes it is not in the inward part of the covenant they are interested, only in the external part of it, where hypocrites and graceless persons may be; but what that external part is no mortal can tell: others not being satisfied that their infant-seed as such are all interested in the covenant of grace, say, it is not that, but the church-covenant that godly parents enter into, which gives their children with them a right to church membership and baptism: children in their minority, it is said, covenant with their parents, and so become church members, and this entitles them to baptism (Disputation Concerning Church-members and Their Children at Boston, p. 12,13; Hooker's Survey of Church-discipline, part 3, p. 24,25); for according to the old Independents of

New England, none but members of a visible church were to be baptized (Cotton's Way of the Churches in New England, p. 81; Boston-Disputation, p. 4; Defense of the Nine Propositions, p. 115); though Dr. [Thomas] Goodwin is of a different mind (Government of the Churches of Christ, p. 377): hence only such as were children of members of churches, even of set members (Defense of the Nine Propositions, p. 69), as they call them, were admitted, though of godly and approved Christians; and though they may have been members, yet if excommunicated, their children born in the time of their excommunication might not be baptized (Cotton's Way, p. 85; Boston-Disp., p. 25; Hooker's Survey, part 3, p. 18); but those children that are admitted members and baptized, though not confirmed members, as they style them, till they profess faith and repentance (Cotton's Holiness of Church-members, p. 19; Boston-Disp., p. 3); yet during their minority, which reaches till they are more than thirteen years of age, according to the example of Ishmael, and till about sixteen years of age, they are real members to such intents and purposes, as, that if their parents are dismissed to other churches, their children ought to be put into the letter of dismission with them (Ibid., p. 15); and whilst their minority continues, are under church-watch, and subject to the reprehensions, admonitions, and censures thereof for their healing and amendment (Cambridge-Platform of Church-Government, p. 18) as need shall require; though with respect to public rebuke, admonition, and excommunication, children in their minority are not subject to church-discipline, only to such as is by way of spiritual watch and private rebuke

(Boston-Disp., p. 14). The original Independents, by the covenant-seed, who have a right to church membership and baptism, thought only the seed of immediate parents in church-covenant are meant, and not of progenitors (Boston-Disp., p. 19). Mr. Cotton says (Cotton's Way of the Churches, p. 81) infants cannot claim right unto baptism but in the right of one of their parents or both; where neither of the parents can claim right to the Lord's Supper, there their infants cannot claim right to baptism;" though he afterwards says (Ibid., p. 115) it may be considered, whether the children may not be baptized, where either the grandfather or grandmother have made profession of their faith and repentance before the church, and are still living to undertake for the Christian education of the child (Of this see Epist. Calvin Ep. Farello, p. 175 and Salden. Otia, Theolog. Exercitat. 7, sect. 21, p. 544); or if these fail, what hinders but that if the parents will resign their infant to be educated in the house of any godly member of the church, the child may be lawfully baptized in the right of its household-governor. But Mr. Hooker, as he asserts, that children as children have no right to baptism, so it belongs not to any predecessors, either nearer or farther off removed from the next parents to give right of this privilege to their children; by which predecessors, he says, he includes and comprehends all besides the next parent; grandfather, great grandfather, etc. (Survey of Church-Discipline, part 3, p. 13). So the ministers and messengers of the congregational churches that met at the Savoy declare "that not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto

Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized, and those only" (Declaration of the Faith and Order, etc., c. 29, p. 48): and the commissioners for the review of the Common Prayer, in the beginning of the reign of King Charles the Second; those of the Presbyterian persuasion moved on the behalf of others, that "there being divers learned, pious, and peaceable ministers, who not only judge it unlawful to baptize children whose parents both of them are Atheists, Infidels, Heretics, or unbaptized; but also such whose parents are excommunicate persons, fornicators, or otherwise notorious and scandalous sinners; we desire, say they, they may not be enforced to baptize the children of such, until they have made open profession of their repentance before baptism." (Proceedings of the Commissioners of Both Persuasions, etc., p. 22): but now I do not understand, that the present generation of dissenters of this denomination, adhere to the principles and practices of their predecessors, at least very few of them; but admit to baptism, not only the children of members of their churches, but of those who are not members, only hearers, or that apply to them for the baptism of their infants, whether gracious or graceless persons: and were only the first sort admitted, children of members, what are they? No better than others, born in sin, born of the flesh, carnal and corrupt, are of the world, notwithstanding their birth of religious persons, until they are called out of it by the effectual grace of God; and as they grow up, appear to be of the world as others, and have their conversation according to the course of it; and many of them are dissolute in their lives,

and scandalous in their conversation; and yet I do not understand, that any notice is taken of them in a church-way, as to be admonished, censured, and excommunicated; but they retain their membership, into which they were taken in their infancy, and continue in it to the day of their death: and if this is not uniting and keeping the world and church together, I know not what is.

Moreover all the arguments that are made use of to prove the church of Christ under the gospel-dispensation to be congregational, and against a national church, are all destroyed by the baptism and membership of infants. It is said in favor of the one, and against the other, that the members of a visible church are saints by calling, such, as in charitable discretion may be accounted so (Cotton's Way of the Churches, etc., p. 56); but are infants who are admitted to membership and baptized, such? The holiness pleaded for as belonging to them, is only a federal holiness, and that is merely chimerical: are they called to be saints, or saints by effectual calling? Can they in charitable discretion, or in rational charity be thought to be truly and really holy, or saints, as the churches of the New Testament are said to be? and if they cannot in a judgment of charity, be accounted real saints, and yet are admitted members of churches, why not others, of whom it cannot be charitably thought, that they are real saints? Besides, it is said by the Independents, "that members of gospel churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing by their profession and walk their obedience to that call; who are further known to each other by their confession of faith wrought in

them by the power of God; and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the gospel" (Savoy-Declaration, etc., p. 57): now are infants such? Do they manifest and evidence by a profession and walk their obedience to a divine call? And if they do not, and yet are admitted members, why not others, who give no more evidence than they do? Do they make a confession of faith wrought in them? Does it appear that they have such a faith? and in a confession made, and so made as to be known by fellow-members? and if not, and yet received and owned as members, why not others that make no more confession of faith than they do? Do infants consent to walk with the church of Christ, and give up themselves to the Lord and one another, and profess to be subject to the ordinances of the gospel? and if they do not, as most certainly they do not, and yet are members, why may not others by also members on the same footing? It is objected to a national church, that persons of the worst of characters are members of it; and by this means the church is filled with men very disreputable and scandalous in their lives? and is not this true of infant members admitted in their infancy, who when grown up are very wicked and immoral, and yet their membership continues? and why not then national churches be admitted of, notwithstanding the above objection? So that upon whole, I think, I have good reason to say, "that there cannot be a full separation of the one from the other, that is, of the church from the world, nor a thorough reformation in religion, until it (infant-

baptism) is wholly removed."

III. In the said preface, I express my firm belief of the entire cessation of infant-baptism, in time to come: my words are, "**though it** (infant baptist) **has so long and largely obtained** (as it has from the 4th century till now, and over the greater part who have since borne the Christian name) **and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world,**" I mean in the spiritual reign of Christ; for in His personal reign there will be no ordinances, nor the administration of them; and this is explained by what I farther say, "when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive purity and lustre; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered; all which will be accomplished, when 'the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one;'" that is, when there shall be one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, acknowledged by all Christians; and they will be all of one mind with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel. And as it becomes every man to give a reason of the faith and hope he has concerning divine things, with meekness and fear; the reasons of my firm belief, that infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the latter day and spiritual reign of Christ, are, some of them suggested in the above paragraph, and others may be added, as

FIRST, Because churches in the time

referred to, will be formed on the plan churches were in the time of the apostles; that this will be the case, see the prophecies in Is. 1:25,26; Jer. 30:18,20; Rev. 11:19. Now the apostolic churches consisted only of baptized believers, or of such who were baptized upon profession of their faith; the members of the first Christian church, which was at Jerusalem, were first baptized upon their conversion, and then added to it; the next Christian church at Samaria, consisted of men and women baptized on believing the gospel, preached by Philip; and the church at Corinth, of such who hearing, believed and were baptized; and on the same plan were formed the churches at Rome, Philippi, Colosse, and others; nor is there one single instance of infant-baptism and of infant-church-membership in them; wherefore if churches in the latter day will be on the same plan, then infant-baptism will be no more practiced.

SECONDLY, Because, then the ordinances of the gospel will be administered, as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; this is what is meant by the temple of God being opened in heaven, on the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:19 and 15:5), which respects the restoration of worship, discipline, doctrines and ordinances, to the free use of them, and to their original purity; when, as the ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be administered clear of all corruptions and ceremonies introduced by **Papists** and retained by **Protestants**; so likewise the ordinance of baptism both with respect to subject and mode, which as it was first delivered was only administered to persons professing faith and repentance, and that by immer-

sion only; and if this will be universally administered in the latter day, as in the first ages of Christianity, infant sprinkling will be practiced no more.

THIRDLY, Because Christ will then be king over all the earth in a spiritual sense; one Lord, whose commands will be obeyed with great precision and exactness, according to His will revealed in His Word; and as baptism is one of His commands He has prescribed, as He is and will be acknowledged the one Lord and head of the church, and not the pope, who will be no more submitted to; so there will be one baptism, which will be administered to one sort of subjects only, as He has directed, and in one manner only, by immersion, of which His baptism is an example; and therefore, I believe that infant sprinkling will be no more in use.

FOURTHLY, At this same time the name of Christ will be one, that is, His religion; which will be the same, it was at first instituted by Him. Now it is various, as it is professed and practiced by different persons that bear His name; but in the latter day, it will be one and the same, in all its branches, as embraced, professed, and exercised by all that are called Christians; and as baptism is one part of it, this will be practiced in a uniform manner, or by all alike, that shall name the name of Christ; for since Christ's name or the Christian religion in all its parts, will be the same in all the professors of it; I therefore firmly believe, that baptism will be practiced alike by all, according to the primitive institution, and consequently, that infant baptism will be no more: for

FIFTHLY, As at this time, the watchmen will see eye to eye (Is. 52:8), the minis-

ters of the gospel will be of one mind, both with respect to the doctrines and duties of Christianity; will alike preach the one, and practice the other; so the people under their ministrations will be all agreed, and receive the truths of the gospel in the love of them, and submit to the precepts and institutions of it, without any difference among themselves, and without any variation from the word of God; and among the rest, the ordinance of baptism, about which there will be no longer strife; but all will agree, that the proper subjects of it are believers, and the right mode of it immersion; and so infant-sprinkling will be no more contended for; saints in this as in other things will serve the Lord with one consent (Zeph. 3:9).

SIXTHLY, Another reason why I firmly believe, infant-baptism will hereafter be no more practiced, is, because Antichrist will be entirely consumed with the spirit or breath of Christ's mouth, and with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8), that is, with the pure and powerful preaching of His word, at His coming to take to Himself His power, and reign spiritually in the churches, in a more glorious manner; when all Antichristian doctrines and practices will be entirely abolished and cease, even the whole body of Antichristian worship; not a limb of Antichrist shall remain, but all shall be consumed. Now as I believe, and it has been shown, that infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery, a limb of Antichrist, a branch of superstition and will-worship, introduced by the man of sin, when he shall be destroyed, this shall be destroyed with him and be no more.

SEVENTHLY, Though the notion of infant-

baptism has been embraced and practiced, by many good and godly men in several ages; yet it is part of the wood, hay and stubble, laid by them upon the foundation; is one of those works of theirs, the bright day of the gospel shall declare to be a falsehood; and which the fire of the word will try, burn up, and consume, though they themselves shall be saved; and therefore being utterly consumed, shall no more appear in the world: for

EIGHTHLY, When the angel shall descend from heaven with great power, and the earth be lightened with his glory,which will be at the fall of Babylon and ruin of Antichrist (Rev. 18:1,2), such will be the blaze of light then given, that all Anti-christian darkness shall be removed, and all works of darkness will be made mani-fest and cast off, among which infant-baptism is one; and then the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Is. 11:9), even of the knowledge of the word, ways, worship, truths, and ordinances of God, and all ig-norance of them vanish and disappear; and then the ordinance of baptism will appear in its former lustre and purity, and be embraced and submitted to in it; and every corruption of it be rejected, of which infant-baptism is one.

NINTHLY, Whereas the ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to continue until the second coming of Christ, or the end of the world (Matt. 28: 19,20; 1 Cor. 11:26), and whereas there have been corruptions introduced into them, as they are generally administered, unless among some few; it is not reason-able to think, that those corruptions will be continued to the second coming of Christ, but that they will be removed be-

fore, even at His spiritual coming, or in His spiritual reign: and as with respect to baptism particularly, there must be a mistake on one side or the other, both with respect to subject and mode; and as this mistake I firmly believe is on the side of the Paedobaptists; so, I as firmly believe for the reason given, that it will be removed, and infant-sprinkling for the future no more used.

TENTHLY, the Philadelphian church-state, which answers to and includes the spiritual reign of Christ in His churches, is what I refer unto in the preface, as the time when the practice of infant-baptism will cease; in which I am confirmed, by the characters given of that church and the members of it; as that it kept the word of Christ; that is, not only the doctrines of the gospel, which will be then purely preached and openly professed, but the ordinances of it, baptism and the Lord's Supper; which have been (particularly baptism) sadly corrupted in almost all the periods of the churches hitherto, excepting the apostolic one; but will in this period be restored to their pristine purity and glory; hence it is promised to this church, and that it represents, that because it kept the word of Christ's patience, truly and faithfully, it should be kept from the hour of temptation that should come on all the earth; and is exhorted to hold fast what she had, both the doctrines and ordinances, as they were delivered by Christ and His apostles, and as she now held them in the truth and purity of them. These are the reasons why I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is coming, and I hope will not be long, when infant-baptism will be no more practised in the world.

Since, now at this time, we are greatly and justly alarmed with the increase of popery; in order to put a stop to it, let us begin at home, and endeavor to remove all remains of it among ourselves; so shall we with the better grace, and it may be hoped, with greater success oppose and hinder the spread of it.

P O S T S C R I P T

The writer who lately appeared in a newspaper, under the name of Candidus, having been obliged to quit his mountebank-stage on which he held forth to the public for a few days; has, in his great humility, condescended to deal out his packets, in a less popular way; under the title of, The True Scripture-Doctrine of the Mode and Subjects of Christian Baptism, etc., in six letters. It is quite unreasonable that we should be put, by every impertinent scribbler, to the drudgery of answering, what has been answered over and over again in this controversy. However I shall make short work of this writer, and therefore I have only put him to, and shall only give him a little gentle correction at the cart's tail, to use the phrase of a late, learned professor, in one of our universities, with respect to the discipline of a certain Bishop.

The first and second letters of Candidus, in the newspaper, are answered in marginal notes on my sermon upon baptism, and published along with it. His third letter is a mean piece of bufoonery and scurrility; it begins with a trite, vulgar proverb, in low language, fit only for the mouth of a hostler or a carman; and his friends seem to have spoiled one or other of these, by making him a parson. He goes on throughout the whole of the letter, as one that is in great haste, running after his wits, to seek for them, having lost

them, if ever he had any; and it concludes with a poor, pitiful, foolish burlesque, mixed with slander and falsehood, on an innocent gentleman; quite a stranger to him, and could never have offended him, but by a conscientious regard to what he believed was his duty. However, by this base and inhumane treatment, it appears that his moral character is unimpeachable, or otherwise it would have been nibbled at. His fourth letter begins with representing the sermon published, as so mangled, changed, altered and added to, that it has scarce any remains of its original; in which he must be condemned by all that heard it: and he has most unluckily charged one clause as an addition, which, there cannot be one in ten but will remember it; it is this, "if any man can find any others in his (the jailer's) house, besides all that were in it, he must be reckoned a very sagacious person;" and he himself, in his first letter published before the sermon was, has an oblique glance at it; calling me, in a sneering way, "the sagacious doctor." What he says in the following part of the letter, concerning the subjects of baptism, and what he intended to say concerning the mode in another letter, which was prevented, I suppose are contained in a set of letters now published; and which are addressed, not to Mr. Printer, who cast him off, but to a candid Antipaedobaptist, and indeed the epithet of candid better agrees with that sort of people than with himself, of which he seems conscious, if he has any conscience at all; for it looks as if he had not, or he could never have set out with such a most notorious untruth, and impudent falsehood; affirming that I said in my sermon, that "the ten

commandments, styled the moral law, were not binding on Christ's disciples:" a greater untruth could not well have been told: my writings in general testify the contrary, and particularly two sermons I have published, one called "The Law Established by the Gospel," and the other, "The Law in the Hand of Christ;" which are sufficient to justify me from such a wicked calumny; and the paragraph with which my sermon begins, attacked by him, and which I declare, are the words I delivered in the pulpit, that "the ten commandments, are the commands of God, and to be observed by Christians under the present dispensation;" for which I quoted 1 Cor. 9:21, this I say, must stare him in the face, and awaken his guilty conscience, if not seared as with a red hot iron; which I fear is his case. As for his flings at eternal justification, which he has lugged into this controversy, and his grand concluding and common argument against it, that it is eternal nonsense, I despise; he has not a head for that controversy: and I would only put him in mind of what Dr. [John] Owen said to [Richard] Baxter, who charged him with holding it, "What would the man have me say? I have told him, I am not of that opinion; would he have me sware to it, that I am not? but though I am not, I know <u>better</u> and <u>wiser</u> men than myself that do hold it."

Somebody in the newspaper observing that this man was froward and perverse, and fearing he should do hurt to religion in general, in order to divert him from it, and guide him another way; complimented him with being a man of wit, and of abilities; and the vain young man fancies he really is one: and being a witty youth, and of abilities, he has been able

to produce an instance of infant-baptism about 1500 years before Christian baptism was instituted; though he must not have the sole credit of it, because it has been observed before him: the instance is of the passage of the Israelites through the sea, at which time, he says, their children were baptized, as well as they: come then, says he, in very polite language, this is one scripture-instance; but if he had had his wits about him, he might have improved this instance, and strengthened his argument a little more; by observing that there was a mixed multitude, that came with the Israelites out of Egypt, and with them passed through the sea, with their children also. And since he makes mention of Nebuchadnezzar's baptism, it is much he did not try to make it out that his children were baptized also, then or at some other time. This is the true scripture doctrine, of the subjects of Christian baptism, according to his title.

That the Jews received their proselytes by baptism, before the times of Christ, he says, I know; but if I do, he does not. I observe, he is very ready to ascribe great knowledge of things to me, which he himself is ignorant of; I am much obliged to him: the great names he opposes to me, don't frighten me; I have read their writings and testimonies, and know what they were capable of producing, and to what little purpose; though I must confess, it is amazing to me, that any men of learning should give into such a notion, that Christian baptism is founded upon a tradition of the baptism or dipping of proselytes with the Jews; of which tradition there is not the least hint, neither in the Old nor in the New Testament; nor in the Apocryphal writings between both; nor

in Josephus; nor in Philo the Jew; nor in the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions; compiled in the second century, or at the beginning of the third, whether of the Jerusalem or Babylonian editions. I am content to risk that little reputation I have for Jewish learning, on this single point; if any passage can be produced in the Misnah, mentioning such a tradition of the Jews, admitting proselytes by baptism or dipping, whether adult or children. I own it is mentioned in the Gemara, both Jerusalem and Babylonian, a work of later times, but not in the Misnah; though Dr. Gale has allowed it without examination. The only passage in it which Dr. Wall refers to from Selden, though not fully expressed, is this "a female stranger, a captive, a maiden, which are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free; being **under** (the next paragraph is **above**) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry" (Misnah, Cetubat, c. 1, f. 2-4); i.e., at marriage: but not a tittle, is here or anywhere else in the Misnah, of receiving either minors or adult as proselytes by baptism or dipping: and supposing such a Jewish tradition, five hundred, or three hundred, or two hundred years after Christ; or even so many years before Christ, of what avail would it be? He must be strangely bigoted to an hypothesis, to believe that our Lord, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, and particularly those concerning their baptisms or dippings; should found His New Testament ordinance of baptism, on a tradition of theirs, without excepting it from the other traditions, and without declaring His will it should be continued, which He has not done; and yet this, as Dr. Hammond

suggests, in the basis of infant-baptism: to what wretched shifts must the Paedo-baptists be driven, for a foundation to place infant-baptism on, as to place it on such a rotten one; a tradition of men, who at other times, are reckoned by them, themselves, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable of all men, upon the face of the earth? For the farther confutation of this notion, see Sir Norton Knatchbull on 1 Pet. 3:20,21; Stennett against Ruffen, p. 61; Gale's Reflections on Wall's History of Baptism, letters 9 and 10; Rees on Infant-Baptism, p. 17-29.

I shall not pursue this writer any farther, by giving particular answers to his arguments, objections, and queries, such as they are; but shall only refer the reader to the answers that have been already given to them: as to the threadbare argument, from Abraham's covenant, and from circumcision; for Old Testament times and cases, are chiefly dealt in, to settle a New Testament ordinance, see Ewer's Answer to Hitchin, Rees against Walker, and my answers to Dickinson, Clarke, and Bostwick. Of the unreasonableness of requiring instances of the adult baptism of children of Christian parents, in the scriptures, see my Strictures on Bostwick's Fair and Rational Vindication, etc., p. 106. Of the testimonies of the ancient Christian writers, in favor of infant-baptism, see Gale's Reflections, etc., letters 11, 12, 13; Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 150 and etc.; some treatises of mine, The Divine Right of Infant Baptism Examined, etc., p. 20-25; The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, etc.; Antipaedobaptism; Reply to Clarke, p. 18-23; Strictures on Bostwick, p. 100-103.

I called upon this writer, in the notes

on my sermon, to name any lexicographer of note, that ever rendered the word **baptizo** by "perfundo" or "aspergo," "pour" or "sprinkle;" and behold! Leigh's Critica Sacra, is the only book quoted! and he the only lexicographer mentioned, if he may be so called! a book which every one of our illiterate lay-preachers, as they are called, are capable of quoting, and of confronting this writer with it; by observing that Leigh says, that "the native and proper signification of the word, is **to dip into water,** or **to plunge under water**, Jn. 3:22,23; Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38." In proof of baptism by immersion, and of the true signification of the word, see Gale's Reflections, etc., letters 3 and 4; Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 121; and my treatises of The Ancient Mode of Baptizing and the Defense Of It, with The Divine Right of Infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 90, etc.

I bid this writer adieu: God give him repentance for his sins, and the pardon of them; and this I am sure he cannot charge, neither with uncharitableness, nor with Antinomianism.

When the Paedobaptists write again, it may be expected they will employ a better hand; or should they choose to fix upon one of their younger sort again; let them take care, first to wring the milk well out of his nose, before they put a pen in his hand.

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